

University Medical Center, Dr. Harry Jacobson in one sentence describes very well what his peers feel about Dr. Satcher.

I quote from that letter.

We believe Dr. Satcher is well qualified to fill these two positions where his medical knowledge, executive experience, and very real eloquence on behalf of the Nation's health make him uniquely suited.

From the Tennessee Medical Association, talking about his tenure at Meharry—remember, he was there for 11 years—Dr. Benton Adkins, who is President of the Tennessee Medical Association, writes:

During his tenure at Meharry, he presented a strong voice in the Nashville community as a public health advocate. I am especially pleased to commend him to you for consideration in light of his stellar leadership, unparalleled history of community service, and sense of mission in the public health sector.

In the third letter, Mr. Samuel Howard, chairman of Phoenix Healthcare Corp., who had known him well through working together at Meharry, says:

Dr. Satcher is a physician-scholar with a strong public health focus.

Those are just samplings of the sort of recommendations by his associates.

I urge my colleagues to focus on Dr. David Satcher's qualifications to hold the two positions of U.S. Surgeon General and Assistant Secretary for Health. As I mentioned, he is a family physician. He respects the role of the family within the community. He is an accomplished scientist and researcher. He has a Ph.D. as well as a medical degree. His Ph.D. is in cytogenetics—he allows science to drive decisionmaking, not politics. He is a proven public health leader—an experienced public health leader—having served as Director, where he currently serves, of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, GA, which is that Health and Human Service agency responsible for promoting health and preventing disease, injury, and premature death, with 11 major branches and worldwide responsibilities.

Mr. President, in closing, as a physician, I will have to say that ultimately much of my feeling comes back to putting faith in the trust, which is a very vital part of the doctor-patient relationship. I look at this very similarly. The Surgeon General is the people's doctor. And, to be truly effective, Dr. Satcher must earn and maintain the public's trust on health issues. Trust I think will be a large part of this nomination. It was the main reason, if we look at failures, I think that occurred in the past as related to this position.

From everything that I know of Dr. Satcher, he not only has the ability to be a reasoned scientific voice but he has the ability to win the trust of the American people.

I am fortunate to have known Dr. Satcher in his capacity as physician, as a president of a medical school, and as the head of one of our great public health agencies.

I will work with my colleagues in the U.S. Senate in this nomination process, and I urge their full, fair, and expeditious consideration of Dr. Satcher's nomination.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire). Without objection, it is so ordered.

THE VICE PRESIDENT

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I want to say a few words this morning about the Vice President of the United States—a man with whom most of us in this Chamber have served either in the House or here in the Senate.

Right now, the bright glare of the public spotlight is on AL GORE. I think all of us know that public spotlight can sometimes be very harsh and unforgiving. Sometimes it can distort. But I don't believe the frenzy of the moment is going to diminish the achievement of two decades.

AL GORE has spent 21 years in public life—and it has been a distinguished 21 years by any standard. Before his career in the Congress, he was an investigative reporter for the Nashville Tennessean. Prior to that time, he was a student at Vanderbilt's Divinity and Law Schools. And prior to that, he served this country honorably during the Vietnam war.

People sometimes make a caricature of AL GORE's reputation for seriousness and honesty. But the truth of the matter is that AL GORE earned that reputation by immersing himself totally in his responsibilities as a lawmaker.

In the House, he mastered the subtleties of the arms control debate and made internationally recognized contributions to stabilizing the nuclear arms race. In the Senate, he devoted himself passionately to protecting the environment. He was one of the first in this body to appreciate the potential of Federal Government supercomputers and the backbone that ultimately became the information superhighway. There's every likelihood that he will be remembered as a parent of the internet just as his own father is remembered as one of the founders of the Interstate Highway System.

By almost all accounts, AL GORE has been the most influential and effective Vice President in modern American history. His Reinventing Government Program has literally revolutionized the executive branch agencies, reducing the size of bureaucracies, cutting out red tape, and building a more business-like paradigm for the delivery of vital services to the American people.

That litany of achievement is real and familiar. I only run through it to

give some sense of proportion to the charges that are now dominating the news. And my point is simple: we know AL GORE in this Chamber. The American people know him. The hearings we've had here in the Congress have revealed nothing to alter what we know. And I don't believe that insubstantial charges based on ambiguous law are going to count for anything against AL GORE's solid and unambiguous record of public service.

I'm confident that, ultimately, a dispassionate and fair-minded American people will put the issues raised in the last campaign in their proper perspective. And I'm equally confident that, at the end of the day, AL GORE's reputation for public service and integrity will emerge absolutely intact.

THE VERY BAD DEBT BOXSCORE

Mr. HELMS. Mr. President, at the close of business yesterday, Thursday, September 11, 1997, the Federal debt stood at \$5,414,576,336,750.83. (Five trillion, four hundred fourteen billion, five hundred seventy-six million, three hundred thirty-six thousand, seven hundred fifty dollars and eighty-three cents)

One year ago, September 11, 1996, the Federal debt stood at \$5,219,274,000,000. (Five trillion, two hundred nineteen billion, two hundred seventy-four million)

Five years ago, September 11, 1992, the Federal debt stood at \$4,032,390,000,000. (Four trillion, thirty-two billion, three hundred ninety million)

Ten years ago, September 11, 1987, the Federal debt stood at \$2,353,045,000,000. (Two trillion, three hundred fifty-three billion, forty-five million)

Twenty-five years ago, September 11, 1982, the Federal debt stood at \$435,983,000,000 (Four hundred thirty-five billion, nine hundred eighty-three million) which reflects a debt increase of nearly \$5 trillion—\$4,978,593,336,750.83 (Four trillion, nine hundred seventy-eight billion, five hundred ninety-three million, three hundred thirty-six thousand, seven hundred fifty dollars and eighty-three cents) during the past 25 years.

NOMINATION OF DR. DAVID SATCHER TO BE SURGEON GENERAL

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I commend President Clinton for his announcement today of his nomination of Dr. David Satcher to be Surgeon General and Assistant Secretary for Health.

David Satcher is an excellent choice for these important positions. As Director of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for the last 4 years, he has ably led that agency which is responsible for protecting health and preventing disease, injury, and premature death. He is uniquely